

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 533

Recognizing Helen Thomas for her pioneering career as a woman in journalism, her lifelong commitment to journalistic independence as an essential pillar of American democracy, and her unflagging and honest coverage of every President of the United States since John F. Kennedy.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 11, 2009

Ms. LEE of California submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

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## RESOLUTION

Recognizing Helen Thomas for her pioneering career as a woman in journalism, her lifelong commitment to journalistic independence as an essential pillar of American democracy, and her unflagging and honest coverage of every President of the United States since John F. Kennedy.

Whereas Helen Thomas was born on August 4, 1920, in Winchester, Kentucky;

Whereas Helen Thomas attended public schools in Detroit, Michigan, and graduated from Wayne State University in 1942;

Whereas Helen Thomas started her career in journalism as a copy girl on the Washington Daily News;

Whereas Helen Thomas joined United Press International (UPI) in 1943 and reported on women's topics for their radio wire service;

Whereas beginning in 1955, Helen Thomas had several reporting assignments revolving around the Federal Government, including the Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and Capitol Hill;

Whereas Helen Thomas began covering then President-elect John F. Kennedy in 1960 and followed him to the White House in 1961 as a UPI correspondent;

Whereas during the Kennedy administration, Helen Thomas was the first woman to close a presidential news conference with the now traditional salutation, "Thank you, Mr. President";

Whereas Helen Thomas was the only female print journalist to travel with President Richard Nixon to China during his historic trip in 1972;

Whereas Helen Thomas has covered every White House Economic Summit since 1975;

Whereas Helen Thomas served as UPI's White House Bureau Chief for over 25 years and authored a column, "Backstairs at the White House", which provided a distinctive insider's view of presidential administrations;

Whereas Helen Thomas was the first female officer of the National Press Club after it opened its doors to women for the first time in 1971;

Whereas Helen Thomas was the first woman officer of the White House Correspondents Association and became its first woman president in 1975;

Whereas in 1975, Helen Thomas also became the first woman member of the oldest journalistic organization in Washington, DC, the Gridiron Club, which represents major newspapers, news services, news magazines, and broadcast networks, and was elected as its first woman president in 1993;

Whereas Helen Thomas has been named the “Newspaper Woman of Washington” by the American Newspaper Women’s Club, “Woman of the Year” by Ladies Home Journal, and one of the most influential women in America by the World Almanac;

Whereas in 1998, Helen Thomas was the inaugural recipient of the Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award, now awarded annually to an individual or individuals for a lifetime of contribution to the journalism profession;

Whereas as a central figure of the White House Press corps, Helen Thomas is commonly referred to as “First Lady of the Press” or “Dean of the White House Press Corps”; and

Whereas Helen Thomas continues to report on the White House and regularly ask pointed questions of the Obama Administration: Now, therefore, be it

- 1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
- 2 nizes Helen Thomas for her pioneering career as a woman
- 3 in journalism, her lifelong commitment to journalistic
- 4 independence as an essential pillar of American democ-
- 5 racy, and her unflagging and honest coverage of every
- 6 President of the United States since John F. Kennedy.

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